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16 April 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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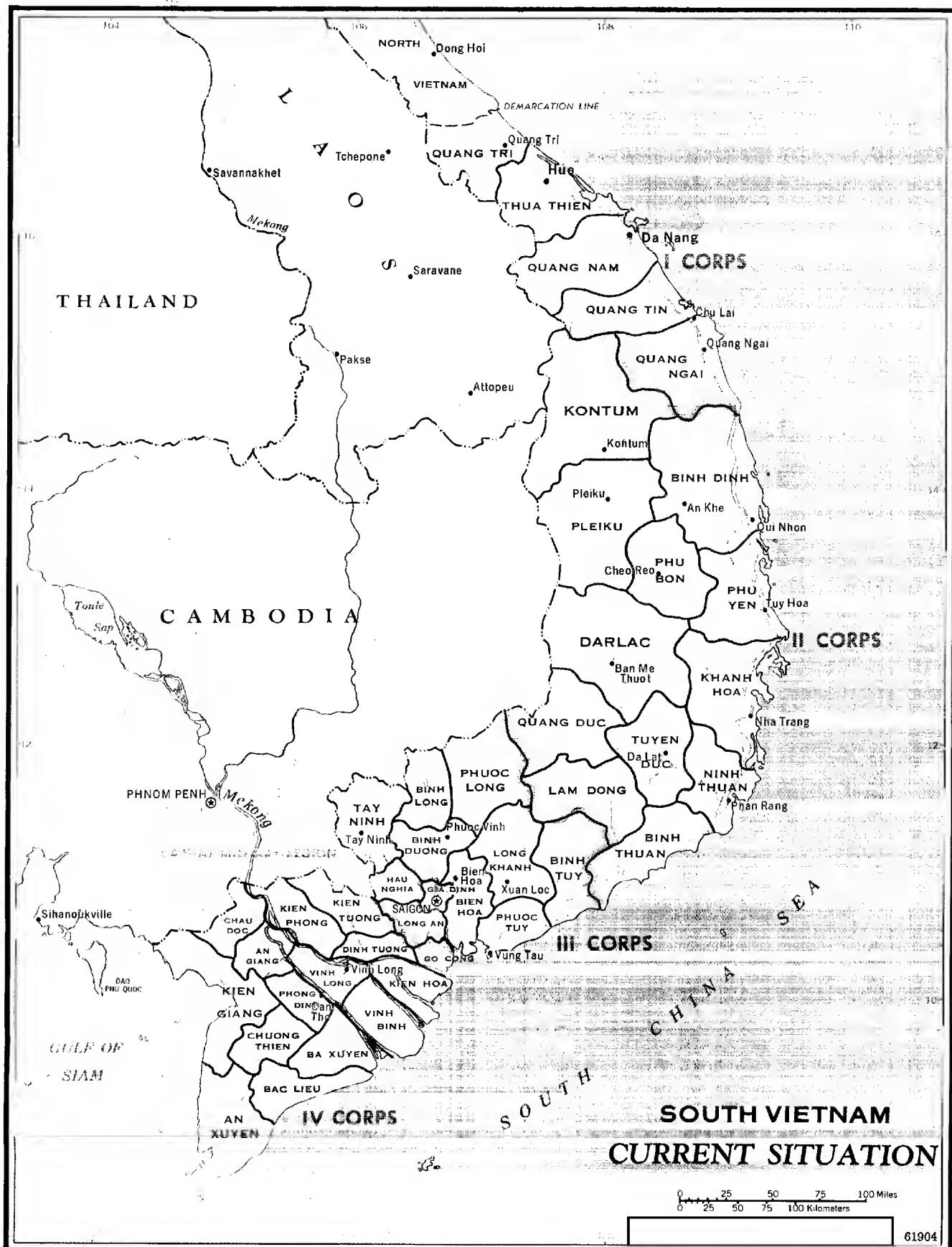
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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Buddhist leaders in Saigon have publicly declared a suspension of their antigovernment campaign pending elections, but elements in the northern provinces continue to clamor for governmental changes.

Thich Ho Giac, an official of the Buddhist Institute in Saigon, told an embassy officer yesterday that Buddhist leaders, at a meeting earlier in the day, had agreed that recent government actions satisfied their demands. Giac affirmed that this meant they would be content to see the Ky government remain in office until a permanent regime is set up.

Giac indicated, however, that the constituent assembly to be elected within three to five months should be empowered to determine what form the government should take from the time it convenes until a constitutional government is installed. The election decree, promulgated by Chief of State Thieu, authorized the assembly only to draft a constitution.

Another new element in the situation yesterday was the first open association with the antigovernment "struggle movement" in I Corps by former corps commander General Thi. Thi, who turned up in Da Nang from Hue, publicly called for an "immediate change in the government," and for demonstrations in the area to continue. The controversial mayor of Da Nang, Nguyen Van Man, made similar statements to the press.

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Demonstrations in Da Nang are continuing, and radiobroadcasts in the name of the "struggle forces" in both Da Nang and Hue continue to denounce the government's election decree as a trick.

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A delegation from the Buddhist Institute in Saigon is being sent to I Corps to try to persuade central Vietnamese Buddhists to cease agitation, according to Ho Giac. Although vague on the composition of the delegation, Giac gave the impression that Tri Quang, probably the most influential monk in central Vietnam, might not lend himself to this effort, at least on any formal basis.

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In a communique on the meeting, institute leaders served notice that their present attitude is contingent upon the government's "fulfilling its pledge," and they may feel reasonably confident that they can find an issue to demonstrate its "bad faith." Thus they may prefer to ease tensions in Saigon, while allowing I Corps to fester and tempt the government into rash action. [The Buddhists are almost undoubtedly aware of dissension and possible plotting within the military, and their present course may merely indicate that they are awaiting new developments.]

The editor-publisher of the Vietnamese newspaper Song was shot to death this morning by an unknown assailant, the second such press murder in recent months. Both victims reportedly had received warnings against printing anti-Communist editorials. During a Buddhist demonstration last week, hoodlums sacked the office of Song, which had also been critical of the disruptive tactics of Tri Quang.

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The Military Situation in South Vietnam: No significant military actions have been reported during the past 24 hours.

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Dominican Republic: Civil disorders are expected during the rest of April as leftists mark the anniversary of the 1965 rebellion and the intervention of US troops.

Left-wing students carried out several anti-US demonstrations in Santo Domingo on 14 April and there is general concern among US officials that increasing leftist agitation will provoke serious incidents.

Prominent figures in the former rebel government, led by Hector Aristy who was a close Caamano adviser, have scheduled a "week of unity" with numerous public demonstrations.

US Embassy officials believe Bosch's Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) is probably anxious to avoid a public show of unity with the Communist parties in the midst of its campaign. So far, the PRD appears to be limiting its ceremonies to indoor events.

Former "constitutionalist" president Francisco Caamano, currently serving as military attaché in London, has indicated that he will not attend the anniversary celebrations.

In a public plea for peaceful celebrations, President Hector Garcia Godoy last week asserted that the provisional government has information that "acts of agitation" have been planned for 24 April and that it knows the persons involved.

The week of 24-30 April was proclaimed "the week of solidarity with the Dominican people" at the Communist-dominated Tri-Continent Conference held in Havana, Cuba last January.

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NOTES

Indonesia: The new Djakarta regime, by its failure to curb mounting anti-Chinese activity throughout Indonesia, appears to be deliberately pushing relations with Peking to the breaking point. Indonesian police and military units on the scene made no attempt to halt yesterday's sacking of the Chinese Communist Embassy in Djakarta by Indonesian students, assisted by several thousand local Chinese. The attack on the embassy followed an anti-Peking rally conducted by local Chinese to demonstrate their loyalty to the Indonesian state.

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UK-NATO: [Important elements of the UK press are viewing the NATO crisis as an opportunity for asserting British leadership in Europe and for developing a streamlined NATO with a more "European" as opposed to an American aspect. Some papers see an advantage in strengthening the UK's ties with Europe through relocation of the North Atlantic Council and Military Committee in London. The US Embassy comments that although there is no indication that an official UK initiative along these lines is imminent, a more active British role would be consistent with increased public interest in Europe evident in the UK over the past year.]

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